(d) whether Union Government pursued this matter with the Bangladesh Authorities including the extradition of militants who are wanted in the country for various crimes committed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I.D. SWAMI): (a) and (b) The Government are aware that militant groups such as United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA), National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB), All Tripura Tiger Force (ATTF), National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT), Hynniewtrep National Liberation Council (HNLC), Achik National Volunteer Council (ANVC) and National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN/IM) operating in the North East have established their base camps and several hide-outs in Bangladesh.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The Government have been regularly taking up these security related issues with the Government of Bangladesh at different levels and have been assured that the territory of Bangladesh would not be allowed to be used for activities inimical to India's interests.

Remarks on the Acts of Extremist groups in Gujarat

2884. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have seen the remarks made by the US Commission on International Religious Freedom classifying India among the countries of particularly concern;

(b) whether the Commission has cited the violence against the religious minorities in Gujarat early this year in its comment;

(c) whether the US Commission has also cited the evidence discovered by Indian National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) of premeditation by members of majority extremist groups, Gujarat State Government and Police in action; and

(d) if so, Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I.D. SWAMI): (a) The power to designate any country as a "Country of Particular Concern" (CPC) lies with the U.S. Secretary of State, and not with the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF).

In a letter dated 30th September, 2002, the USCIRF recommended to the Secretary of State that India may be identified as a Country of Particular Concern. However, the Secretary of State has not designated India as a CPC in the latest report on the Internatinal Religious Freedom issued by the State Department in October, 2002.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The US Commission on International Religious Freedom is a non-official body mandated by the U.S. Congress. Government consider its report as part of the internal process of a foreign Government, and reject any interference in India's internal affairs. It is well known that the Constitution of India guarantees equal religious, social and political rights to all its citizens, including minorities.

Inclusion of Hyderabad-Karnataka region in Article-371

2885. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Karnataka Government has requested the Government to include the Hyderabad-Karnataka region in Article 371 to ensure special status to the people of this region in education and employment opportunities;

(b) if so, when the proposal was sent to Government; and

(c) the present status of the proposal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I.D. SWAMI): (a) to (c) In September, 2001, a proposal was received from the State Government of Karnataka for amending Article 371 of the Constitution of India to provide for region-wise reservation in employment and admission to educational institutions in Karnataka on the lines of provisions in Article 371 D of the Constitution of India with respect to the State of Andhra Pradesh. The proposal of the State Government of Karnataka has not been found feasible.

Floods in Manipur

2886. SHRI RISHANG KEISHING: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Manipur was ravaged by on unprecedented flood during the last monsoon;

(b) the damages caused by the flood in paddy fields crops, properties, human lives and cattles;